

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02

SS-15 ICA-20 TRSE-00 AID-05 /103 W

-----097409 281313Z /44

R 271400Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3609

UNCLAS ASUNCION 3044

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SHUM, PINT, PA

SUBJECT: LAINO CASE: PRESS STATEMENT BY WOLA REPRESENTATIVES

REF: ASUNCION 3022

FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE STATEMENT MADE TO THE PRESS JULY 25 BY WOLA REPRESENTATIVES WILLIAM B. BROWN AND JO MARIE GRIESGRABER. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WHICH FOLLOWED MR. BROWN'S READING OF THE PRESS STATEMENT IN SPANISH ARE BEING SENT SEPTEL.

BEGIN TEXT. MY NAME IS WILLIAM B. BROWN, I AM THE CO-FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE WASHINGTON OFFICE ON LATIN AMERICA (WOLA). WITH ME IS SISTER JO MARIE GRIESGRABER, C.P.P.S., DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF WOLA.

WE ARE HERE TODAY TO EXPLAIN TO THE PEOPLE OF PARAGUAY THE NATURE AND OBJECTIVES OF WOLA, TO CORRECT THE RECORD ABOUT SR. JO MARIE GREISGRABER, AND TO STATE THAT WE ARE AT THE DISPOSITION OF PARAGUYAN OFFICIALS TO RECTIFY AND TO CLARIFY THE RECORD. WE COME BECAUSE DR. LAINO, A GUEST OF OUR OFFICE, WAS-- BY ALL RELIABLE REPORTS--ABDUCTED LESS THAN 24 HOURS AFTER RETURNING FROM WASHINGTON, ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL CHARGES AGAINST HIS IS ASSOCIATING WITH WOLA, ESPECIALLY SR. GRIESGRABER.

FOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION WE PRESENT A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE NATURE AND AIMS OF WOLA. OUR OFFICE, A PRIVATE, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION, WAS FOUNDED IN 1974 BY A BROAD COLITION OF CHURCH PERSONS
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AND SCHOLARS WHO HAD DEEP CONCERNS REGARDING HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY IN LATIN AMERICA. INCLUDED IN THE GROUP WERE THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES, THE US CATHOLIC CONFERNECE AND THE JEWISH ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE. THESE AND MANY OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ACTIVELY THE WOK OF WOLA. WE HAVE ALSO RECEIVED MONIES FROM PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS SUCH AS THE FORD FOUNDATION. WE RECEIVE NO MONEY FROM THE US OR OTHER GOVERNEMENTS.

THE PURPOSES OF WOLA ARE TO PROMOTE RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY IN LATIN AMERICA. TO DO THIS WOLA SERVES AS AN INFORMATION SOURCE ON LATIN AMERICA THAT RECEIVES, MONITORS, INTERPRETS AND DISSEMINATES DATA ON LATIN AMERICA AND US POLICIES. WOLA FACILITATES DIALOGUE AMONG A BROAD SPECTRUM OF INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED WITH US-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS. IN THIS REGARD WOLA MAINTAINS CONTACT WITH MANY PERSONS IN LATIN AMERICA, FORMING AN IMPORTANT INFORMATIONAL LINK BETWEEN THE LATIN AMERICAN AND WASHINGTON REALITIES. CONTACTS INCLUDE DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL LEADERS, CHURCH-PERSONS, PROFESSIONALS, LABOR LEADERS, ACADEMICS AND EXILES. ON BEHALF OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY, WOLA ARRANGES FOR MANY OF THESE PERSONS TO CONTACT APPROPRIATE PERSONS IN GOVERNMENT AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS IN WASHINGTON.

TODAY, WE SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS OUR ATTENTION TO THE CASE OF DR. DOMINGO LAINO. LESS THAN 24 HOURS AFTER RETURNING TO ASUNCION FROM WASHINGTON HE WAS TAKEN INTO CUSTODY BY PLAINCLOTHESMEN AND LATER ACKNOWLEDGED AS AN OFFICIAL PRISONER OF THE GOVERNMENT OF PARAGUAY. DR. LAINO HAD BEEN AN INVITED GUEST OF WOLA WHILE IN WASHINGTON.

UPON LEARNING OF THE DETENTION OF DR. LAINO, THE ENTIRE DIRECTORATE OF WOLA FELT A DEEP RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS UNFORTUNATE EVENT. OUR CONCERN INTENSIFIED WHEN WE LEARNED THAT ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL CHARGES AGAINST DR. LAINO WAS HIS ASSOCIATION WITH WOLA, SPECIFICALLY WITH THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR, SISTER JO MARIE GRIESGRABER. SO PROFOUND WAS OUR SHOCK THAT WE DECIDED TO SEND TWO OF THE HIGHEST WOLA OFFICIALS TO ASUNCION TO REGISTER OUR CONCERN AND TO SET THE RECORD

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STRAIGHT.

I WOULD NOW LIKE TO CONSIDER THE POLICE CHARGES AGAINST DR. LAINO REFERRING TO SISTER GREISGRABER. FIRST, REGARDING THE NAME, NONE OF THE FOUR VARIATIONS SUGGESTED BY THE GOVERNMENT IS CORRECT. THE CORRECT SPELLING IS JO MARIE GRIESGRABER. THE TITLE IS NOT SENORA, BUT HERMANA. SHE IS A MEMBER OF A CATHOLIC CONGREGATION OF SISTERS, THE SISTERS OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD, WHOSE MOTHERHOUSE IS IN DAYTON, OHIO. SR. GREISGRABER DOES NOT KNOW NOR IS SHE RELATED TO ANY "MARY LOUISE GREENBERG". THE DATA ON MS. GREENBERG STATES SHE WAS BORN IN NEW FOUNDLAND IN 1940. SR. GRIESGRABER WAS BORN IN LACROSSE, WISCONSIN IN 1947. SR. GRIESGRABER WAS NEVER A MEMBER OF ANY "REVOLUTIONARY UNION", AS CHARGED, NOR HAS SHE EVER BEEN ARRESTED. THE FIRST MEETING BETWEEN SR. GRIESGRABER AND DR. LAINO OCCURRED IN MAY 1978 IN THE WASHINGTON AIRPORT. SR. GRIESGRABER WAS NOT IN PARAGUAY IN 1976, AS ALLEGED. HER FIRST AND ONLY PREVIOUS VISIT TO PARAGUAY WAS IN AUGUST 1977, FOR LESS THAN 24 HOURS. DURING THAT TIME SHE MET BRIEFLY WITH US EMBASSY AND CHURCH PERSONS AND WITH DR. MIGUEL ANGEL BESTARD, SUB-SECRETARIO OF THE INTERIOR MINISTRY. WE PRESENT THESE FACTS FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND FROM THEM YOU CAN DRAW YOUR OWN CONCLUSIONS. IT IS OUR HOPE THAT THROUGH YOUR PUBLICATIONS THE PEOPLE OF PARAGUAY CAN KNOW THE ACTUAL NATURE OF

WOLA AND OF OUR ASSOCIATION WITH DR. LAINO. WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO
MAKE THIS INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO INTERESTED AND APPROPRIATE
OFFICIALS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF PARAGUAY. FINALLY, WE WISH TO
REPEAT THAT WE ARE HERE TO CONVEY THE PROFOUND CONCERN OF THE
ENTIRE WOLA DIRECTORATE FOR DR. LAINO AND FOR ALL PEOPLE WHO
SPEAK OUT FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS. END TEXT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, TEXT, VISITS, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ASUNCIO3044
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780310-0207
Format: TEL
From: ASUNCION
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780711/aaaaajkd.tel
Line Count: 123
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fe7d566b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 ASUNCION 3022
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1860738
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LAINO CASE: PRESS STATEMENT BY WOLA REPRESENTATIVES
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, PA, WOLA, (BROWN, WILLIAM B), (GRIESGRABER, JO MARIE), (LAINO, DOMINGO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fe7d566b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014